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What's the agenda behind UF budget cuts?

Your recent article on the budget of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences points out some of the problems with the new five-year plan. In particular, it goes against the stated goal of President Bernie Machen to increase UF's national ranking.

As a Ph.D. candidate teaching in the Department of English, I can attest that upper-level majors in my classes have regularly complained to me about not being able to register for the courses that they need to graduate. The classes are full. I have encouraged my students to write a letter to Dean Sullivan requesting more courses. His response to UF students? Cut the budget. Decrease the number of faculty and graduate students teaching these courses. Increase class size.

Supposedly because of the debt of the college, in large part caused by inadequate funding, the college needs to cut back on resources and funding in certain departments, such as English. Yet the college is also increasing funds to other departments, so it appears that this "budget crisis" is being used as an excuse for restructuring the college and reallocating funds. What is the real reason the administration is willing to jeopardize the quality of education and national standing of our institution?

The faculty, the teaching assistants and lecturers, the graduate and undergraduate students, and the public need answers. The university is a public resource that should not be gutted.
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